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**Better Communities.
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Mentoring Programs Across the State Celebrate January's National Mentoring Month

Kansas Mentors highlights efforts to connect more young people with mentors

TOPEKA, KS – January 4, 2010 – Kansans are being encouraged today to volunteer to mentor as part of January's National Mentoring Month, a campaign that highlights the crucial role played by mentors in helping our young people achieve their full potential.

General Colin L. Powell will headline the 9th annual campaign in an effort to help recruit more mentors and share gratitude with those who are already dedicating their time to our youth.

“Nothing is more important to our Nation's future than preparing our children to lead productive and fulfilling lives,” says General Powell. “You can play an important part by volunteering as a mentor. It doesn't require special skills, just a willingness to listen and to care.”

Research has shown that mentoring has a significant economic and social impact; reducing youth drug abuse and violence while greatly enhancing a young person's prospects for graduating high school and leading a healthy, productive life.

Kansans are encouraged to celebrate National Mentoring Month by:

- Learning more about mentoring at www.KansasMentors.org
- Signing up to mentor with a local mentoring program. For more information, visit www.KansasMentors.org or call the Kansas Mentors office at (785) 296-8873.
- Thanking the mentors in their life on January 21, *National Thank Your Mentor Day*™.

National Mentoring Month is spearheaded by the Harvard School of Public Health, MENTOR, and the Corporation for National and Community Service. Kansas Mentors, the state's mentoring partnership, serves as the local lead for the campaign.

Kansas Mentors is currently partnered with over 175 mentoring programs serving 86 Kansas counties. The organization is committed to providing every young Kansan access to a caring and quality mentor through recruitment, awareness, and training efforts.

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